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Terminal corridor report suggests opportunities for Nanaimo thoroughfare



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It's time for change and to bring the Terminal-Nicol corridor "up to the potential we know it has," said Sandy McLellan, chairman of the South End Neighbourhood Association as council heard how the city gateway can transform.

"What we currently have is not working and the evidence is there for all to see," he said.

After more than a year, the Terminal Nicol Re-imagined Committee's final report on how the stretch from Days Inn to Comox Road could change was laid out for council Monday.

The highway is a gateway into the Harbour City and the committee, since being struck last July, has looked at how to improve it, with public input and support of those such as the City of Nanaimo and Downtown Nanaimo Business Improvement Association.

The report maps out how sections of roadways can change, from pedestrian crosswalks to treed medians and time-of-day parking, talks about seeing development with strong design guidelines and high-quality spaces in front of businesses, regular transit on Nicol Street and parallel cycle routes on Haliburton and Victoria streets.

The word the re-imagined committee has heard resoundingly to describe the corridor's current state is "embarrassing," said chairman Darren Moss.

"Terminal Nicol Re-imagined is aimed at trying to develop bite-sized steps ... to get us to where we can be proud of this corridor and to where it reflects what Nanaimo has to offer. The idea is to encourage our guests to stop and our residents to step back and enjoy the services that Nanaimo has to offer and really stop and appreciate rather than speeding up and getting through."

Moss also said the corridor will be a front door to projects being talked about today like 1 Port Dr., possible fast ferries,

potential upgrades to the Regional District of Nanaimo transit exchange and perhaps a multiplex or event centre and “we want to make sure we get it right.”

McLellan said the ideas put forth have the potential to give the south end a pedestrian-friendly shopping, entertainment and service oriented main street, and provide a lively, attractive southern gateway to the city and most of the ideas are inexpensive to implement such as time-of-day street parking.

Leo Boon, representing the Greater Nanaimo Cycling Coalition and the B.C. Cycling Coalition, however, said a major concern is the width of lanes, designed for roads at high speed and he’d like to see those reduced.

Coun. Ian Thorpe said what he likes about what was done with the plan is that it doesn’t say millions need to be thrown against something right now.

“You are saying, let’s create a vision of where we want to go in the future and when opportunities arise to complete chunks of that, then we know where we want to be,” he said.

Council asked staff for a report on implementation of the study and referred it to the planning and development and public works committees. The report is expected to include impacts on existing policy and steps to move forward.

To see the full report, please visit <http://tnreimagined.ca>.

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